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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7694
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2256
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1895
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1529
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1429
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4652
RUEHBAD/AMCONSUL PERTH 0526
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000120

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, EAP/PD (FOR LNEIGHBORS/GMCLOUGHLIN)
IIP/C, IIP/P, IIP/EAP (DAVENDASORA), EAP/MTS,
EAP/MLS (COPE), EAP/RSP
G (CURRIE)
NSC FOR EPHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/22/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [BM](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: BURMA -- INDONESIAN CIVIL SOCIETY PLANS CONFERENCE

REF: A. 07 JAKARTA 3420

[1](#)B. 07 JAKARTA 2772

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (b+d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: An Indonesian coalition of civil society activists met January 17 with emboffs in order to plan a regional conference on Burma to take place in March in Jakarta. The USG-funded conference would invite civil society representatives from ASEAN and other Asian nations, as well as an American scholar, to participate. The conference would focus on regional humanitarian and associated impacts, with the goal of spurring increased ASEAN-wide activism regarding the Burma crisis and the need for a democratic transition. END SUMMARY.

CONFERENCE PLANNING

[1](#)2. (SBU) A group of Indonesian civil society activists comprised of the Civil Society Coalition for Burma (CSCB), Human Rights Watch Group (HRWG), and the Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence (KONTRAS) met January 17 with DepPol/C and poloff to discuss plans for an upcoming USG-funded regional conference on Burma. The representatives participating in the January 17 meeting included some of Indonesia's most prominent human rights activists with strong links throughout Asia.

[1](#)3. (SBU) CSCB Chair Tri Agus and HRWG Chair Rafendi Djamin agreed at the meeting that the conference should take place as early as possible in March. The two-day event at a Jakarta hotel would invite a civil society representative from each of the ASEAN countries (including Burmese living in exile), and key Asian countries such as China, India, and possibly Japan, as well as an American academic residing in the region or planning to be in the region during March. Organizers would also probably invite a USG official to speak at the conference. ASEAN organization officials, senior Indonesian government officials and possibly UN representatives would also be invited to participate.

CORE OBJECTIVES

[1](#)4. (SBU) The conference would have the following core

objectives:

- to encourage ASEAN and the GOI to take a leading role in influencing the Burma regime toward a democratic transition;
- to re-focus ASEAN, Indonesian and international media attention on the issue, including its humanitarian and associated impacts; and,
- to impress on the regime and its international enablers that civil society in Southeast Asia is deeply concerned about Burma and demands change there.

15. (SBU) The civil society coalition will flesh out a proposed guest list and dates by January 25 with invitations to be sent out by early February. The group would reach out to human rights networks to recruit speakers and will also consult with Mission on whom to invite. Approximately 50 persons will be invited to attend the entire workshop, with about 100 at the opening session. The USG will be recognized as supporting the conference but will play a low-key role in the event.

16. (SBU) The initial proposal suggests that the seminar review the Burmese situation and its regional impacts from humanitarian and associated perspectives, including security and economic-related aspects. ASEAN and other representatives would then discuss lessons learned from their own histories, while the U.S. speaker would discuss international responses and options, and civil society activists would address civil society response. Day two of the workshop would focus on Indonesian and regional strategies on Burma, concluding with a plenary session that would produce a declaration and concrete recommendations for follow-up action and next steps by regional civil society.

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17. (SBU) The National Democratic Institute's (Indonesia) Representative Paul Rowland also attended the meeting, pledging NDI assistance in staging the conference. NDI and the Open Society Institute recently met, he said, to discuss a National Endowment for Democracy-funded Burma effort, agreeing that Indonesia should be the focus country. This initiative would include an international speaking tour of Burmese monks and a photo exhibit portraying the current situation in Burma. Rowland proposed that both of these activities could possibly be planned to be included in the Jakarta conference or otherwise as a lead-in or follow-up to the conference. NDI will also canvas its NGO partners if they want to help support the conference.

18. (SBU) Media coverage will be a major goal of the conference, the NGO planners decided, with national, regional and international publicity to be sought before, during and following the conference. Mission will be in contact with IIP regarding Washington File coverage.

SO FAR, SO GOOD

19. (C) Indonesian civil society seems very excited about the prospect of hosting this event. More work clearly must be done to develop an agenda and on the details of conference organization. Mission will work with Washington on a possible speaking role for a USG official and the possible invite of a U.S. academic or expert. Mission will also work with conference organizers and other Missions in the region regarding who from ASEAN and other Asian countries should be extended invitations.

10. (U) Mission Action officer is Stanley Harsha, Deputy Political Counselor, harshas@state.gov, tel: (6221)3435-9146, cell (62) 0812-103-1866.
HUME